

# Torah & the Law



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# What is the Law

In Jewish tradition, the “Law” = the “Torah.”

- God’s commandments
- First 5 books of the Tanakh (T).

The Law are legal issues, Jewish practice, and Jewish behavior and their interpretations.

# T in Tanakh

5 Books:

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy

# Genre of Law

The predominant genre of the Torah is Law and Lessons through a narrative.

- Notably is the narrative of Moses and the Ten Commandments.
  - *Torat Moshe* - the instruction of Moses.
  - The Decalogue and the stone tablets.

Written and oral law sets out principles and practices that the Jewish community was expected to follow, respect, and obey.

# To Build a Fence

Concept:

1. There is a law that is to be obeyed.
2. Restrictions are put in place that go above and beyond the original law.

With this “fence,” there is no way the law can be broken.

# Jesus' Fence - Adultery

Decalogue:

- Covers murder, anger, adultery, lust, swearing, and the other commandments..

Ex 20.14 “You shall not commit adultery.”

Lev 20.10 “If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall be put to death.”

Deut 5.18 “Neither shall you commit adultery.”

Gospel:

Matt. 5.27-28 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

# Punishment and Justice

## Decalogue:

Ex 21.23-25 “If any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, ***eye for eye, tooth for tooth***, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.”

Lev 24. 19-20 “Anyone who maims another shall suffer the same injury in return: fracture for fracture, ***eye for eye, tooth for tooth***; the injury inflicted is the injury to be suffered.”

Deut 19.21 “Show no pity: life for life, ***eye for eye, tooth for tooth***, hand for hand, foot for foot.”

## Gospel:

God distinctly prescribes when and how an injury was to be retaliated and that the law might not be open at all to the unjust bloodshed that may occur.

Matt 5.38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An ***eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth***.’

# Marriage

Measuring the unchastity of a woman, or more specifically a wife, in Matt. 5.32 is addressed in Lev. 8.6-18 as a strict law.

“None of you shall approach anyone near of kin to uncover nakedness: I am the Lord.”

Nakedness and the concept of nakedness is a central theme in marriage Law when dealing with relationships and women.

Divorce in a marriage is a law discussed in Deuteronomy 24. It is expanded upon by Jesus in Matthew 5.31-32.

The summation of the law gives the husband the power of writing and distributing a certificate of divorce given that the husband never takes the wife back as his again, for she has been defiled.



# Divorce

The husband has the power of writing and distributing a certificate of divorce.

## Base Conditions:

1. There must be solid grounds of infidelity.
2. Husband cannot take back his wife.
3. If the wife is given a formal certificate, she is free to remarry without committing adultery.

# Levirate Marriage

Levirate marriage - a type of marriage in which the brother of a deceased man is obliged to marry his brother's widow.

- The term levirate is a derivative of the Latin word levir, meaning "husband's brother".

In Matthew: This form of marriage shows up in the discussion of Jesus' genealogy in the first book of the gospel. .

# Concluding Thoughts

Torah = Law = Tanakh = Decalogue = Practice = Behavior

All of these are what have built the foundation for Judaism.

The gospel of Matthew can act as a source of interpretation for the law based on Jesus' explanations and elaborations.

# Works Cited

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